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ABSTRACT

Ideas for orienting and training elderly adults to work as volunteers with children in school and nonschool settings are given in this manual. In addition, ideas for planning the goals of an intergenerational program, recruiting volunteers, and preparing children, teachers, and child care staff for interaction with volunteers are provided. Suggested content for the training program includes the rights of children, child development, behavior management, the dangers of stereotyping, and the All Handicapped Children's Act (PL 94-142). Observations of children and on-the-job experience with performance feedback from trainers are recommended as useful means of training elderly volunteers. Program goals include (1) increasing the frequency of intergenerational contact; (2) fostering positive attitudes between generations; (3) providing services for children with special needs; (4) meeting older citizens' needs for growth and development; and (5) fostering a sense of the continuity of human life. Careful program planning is stressed and evaluation of the program is briefly discussed. The document concludes with a list of resources, including books, articles, manuals, and films. (Author/DB)

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Young and Old Together

A Training Manual for Intergenerational Programs

By

Carol Seefeldt
Richard K. Jantz
Kathy Serock
Sue Bredekamp

College of Education
Center on Aging
University of Maryland
College Park, Maryland

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YOUNG AND OLD TOGETHER

A Training Manual For Intergenerational Programs

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YOUNG AND OLD TOGETHER

"...the continuity of all cultures depends on the living presence of at least three generations."

Margaret Mead, 1970, p. 3.

In our culture, it's not easy for three generations to share one another's living presence. Older people are separated from the young. Rather than children and older persons developing informal relations in the family, church or neighborhood, a process of separation of the ages is taking place. The caring connections between young and old are broken. The natural ways the generations used to interact and relate are no longer available.

Recognizing that the ways the old and young generations used to establish continuity in our culture are gone, many are looking to intergenerational programs in school and nonschool settings to provide for the living presence of at least three generations. In these intergenerational programs children, adults and elders interact with one another, reestablishing the relationships of caring believed so necessary for our society.

Today an estimated 100,000 older persons are involved as volunteers in schools and nonschool settings working with children. Programs involving the elderly with children are found in schools, day care centers, Head Start programs, libraries, parks, recreation centers, museums, 4-H Clubs and many other community agencies. These programs, sponsored by private

organizations and Federal agencies, often have as their primary goal, to reestablish the linkages between young and old.

The programs build on the love and affection the young and old in our nation share. Children do have a feeling of affection for older persons. In a 1976 study conducted at the University of Maryland, children called older people, "friendly, good, kind, rich and wonderful." They believed that older people would be fun to be with and would take the time to listen to them, read to them and love them.

Children believed it would be fun to play checkers, cards and other games with an older person. But at the same time these children saw old people as sick, tired, sad, dirty, wrinkled, crippled and ugly. Further, they indicated that they themselves would never grow old. They feared and dreaded their own eventual and inevitable aging. It was of interest to note that the children in this study reported few contacts with older people either inside the family unit or outside.

Perhaps, if these children had contact with older people who were healthy, happy, active and fulfilled, they would not be able to classify the old as tired and sick, nor would they dread their own aging. If children could share the love of an older person and do things with elders that were of interest in their own school settings, it might be more difficult for them to accept the stereotypic myths of age.

Older people also report enjoying the company of children. In a 1979 study conducted at the University of Maryland, older persons reported that children would be fun to do things with and would make

good friends for older people. They thought children were very interested in learning new things and were "the hope of the future."

With both old and young reporting enjoying one another's company and feeling affection for one another, society must arrange for these generations to meet. Intergenerational programs in school and nonschool settings provide a natural way for the institutions of our society to bring young and old together.

This training manual is based on the idea that intergenerational programs are a viable means of insuring the living presence of at least three generations in our culture. It is also based on the concept that intergenerational programs require careful planning, preparation and training of all participants in order to be successful. Human relationships are always complex; creating caring relationships between the generations will undoubtedly be a complex process.

The 1979 study at the University of Maryland on elderly persons' attitudes toward children clearly demonstrated a strong relationship between education of the older person and positive attitudes toward children. Knowledge of children was highly related to positive feelings toward children. Therefore, orientation and training of people to work with children is believed essential.

Ideas for orienting and training the elder volunteer to work with children, as well as for planning the goals of an intergenerational program, recruiting volunteers and preparing children and teachers are given in

this manual. Content for the training programs is suggested and available resources useful to those interested in establishing an intergenerational program are given.

DREAMING

Before beginning an intergenerational program it is important to dream. Dreaming is a form of goal setting. As the song from South Pacific queries, if you don't have a dream, how can you make a dream come true? The first step in planning intergenerational programs is to be certain of the goals for the program. Specific goals should be established for the total program, children and the volunteers.

Some sample goals for the total program may be to:

*increase frequency of contact between generations.

*foster positive attitudes between generations.

*provide additional services for children with special needs.

*meet older citizens' needs for growth and development.

*foster a sense of the continuity of human life.

Another set of goals can be specified for the benefit of the children. Carol Tice of the Teaching-Learning Communities project has established a number of specific goals related to the growth of children. These include increasing children's completion of various craft items under the direction of older volunteers and maintaining art centers. Other programs established different types of goals for children's growth. Sample goals for the children might include such goals as, the children will:

*appreciate relating with older people.

*develop an understanding of the aging process.

*increase positive attitudes toward age and the elderly.

*improve in specific academic skills.

*receive support from an older person.

*learn new skills.

Other program goals should be set for the elderly volunteers themselves. These might include things like, the volunteers will:

*increase their circle of friends.

*improve physical and mental health.

*develop an increased sense of self worth and importance.

Goals for one program will differ from another. It is good to establish goals that can be measured. Think specifically about what could result from the project and how you would know whether or not you've achieved that dream. What behavior would let you know the goal has been achieved? Achievement of program goals can be measured in any number of ways. At times a program documents success by:

*using standardized tests of attitude change. There are instruments to assess children's attitudes toward the elderly and elderly persons' attitudes toward children. These might be given before and after the program to determine if any growth has occurred in positive attitudes between generations.

*anecdotal records. Keeping anecdotal records is another way of documenting program success. Recording what children and volunteers did together, how they interacted and what they said is useful in demonstrating achievement of goals.

*questionnaires and rating forms. Sometimes the easiest way to assess a program is simply to ask the participants how they felt about the project. Asking the older volunteers to rate their own growth and development, the children's and teacher's, may be helpful. Children can also be asked directly to indicate

what they feel they've gained from the program, the parts they liked the best, the least and if they would like to continue with the program. Parents can also answer questions about the effectiveness of the program as can teachers.

Collecting data, either with anecdotal records, questionnaires or standardized tests should be ongoing. This information can be used to support continuation of the project. More than this, however, data can indicate how a program can be improved, become more effective and fulfill each goal.

BEGINNING

Successful intergenerational programs are planned. One of the first steps in planning is to designate someone in the school or the program to be responsible for the volunteer project. One person should clearly be in charge and have full responsibility for the project's overall direction and supervision. It may not always be possible to hire another staff member; but one person must be in charge. This is the person who will do most of the planning and develop the total program. The coordinator of volunteers will:

*prepare the staff and children to work with the elder volunteers.

*recruit, orient and train the volunteers.

*decide on the role of the volunteers.

*plan and schedule the volunteers' time.

*arrange space in the building for a volunteer room.

*supervise the total program.

*be available for the volunteers to talk to, keeping an open line of communication.

*plan the goals of the program.

*evaluate the total program.

*plan the budget, obtain outside funding.

*make plans for reward and recognition for the volunteers.

It's not that the coordinator does these things without consulting the faculty, children, parents, community members and volunteers, but that she or he coordinates the entire planning process and program. Some

other things the coordinator must consider include:

*liability insurance for the elder volunteer.

*transportation.

*meals.

*TB health checks.

*compensation for the volunteers.

Liability insurance is a must when involving older persons with children. Coordinators will be responsible for checking the insurance coverage of the school or project and making certain that the elder volunteers are covered by the insurance plan. Most programs involving older people find that they need to arrange transportation for the volunteers. Either the school system may volunteer transportation or it may be necessary to contract with an outside firm or individuals.

Volunteers may have to eat lunch at school and should always be included in snack times with the children. Volunteers may wish to eat with children or together as a group. Plans must be made with the food service to provide for extra meals and arrangements made for space for the volunteers.

All who come in contact with children may need a health check. Most states require a TB check at the minimum. The coordinator will have to determine what health check the elders will need to work with children and arrange to have this completed.

Intergenerational programs are not without cost. In addition to insurance, transportation and meals, there may be supplies for orientation

and training and for use with children. Outside funding through foundations or federal grants might be obtained. It may be that the community--school board or board of directors of the project--will include the cost of the volunteer program in its budget.

Preparing Staff and Children

All who will work directly with the volunteers must be involved in planning the project. If persons working directly with volunteers are not helped to plan and prepare for the volunteers, they may see the elder person as just one more thing to have to worry about. Often teachers and those working with young children have little experience in supervising others or in giving assignments to others, especially when the others are older than they. Some training or preparation in how to supervise the older volunteer, to work with her, give assignments and plan for the volunteer would be useful.

Teachers and those working directly with children might also think about planning a climate or atmosphere that is welcoming to the older person. They might also reexamine what they are now doing with the children to see how the volunteer can best be utilized. It's the individual teachers who ultimately must make decisions about the tasks of the volunteer and set individual goals for the volunteer and the children in the program.

Preparing Children

Children need time for adjusting their thinking about the volunteers. They need to know that someone else will be working with them and need to plan for this person. Sometimes real guidance may be necessary.

Beforehand the children might think of ways to make the volunteer feel welcome. "Who will introduce the volunteer to the class?" "Where will he sit?" "How will we let her know our names?" "Who will take him to lunch?"

Some discussion about any special physical characteristics of the elder volunteer might be important for children who are unfamiliar with older people. Telling the children something of the special talents, interests or background of the volunteer helps them in establishing relationships with the person.

Books can be selected and read to the children that portray older people in a variety of roles; discussions about age and the elderly can follow the reading of the books. Children can be asked to sort out their own feelings about age and their ideas of the elderly prior to the introduction of the volunteer in the classroom. Some initial preparation will help children feel secure and open to welcoming the new person.

Recruiting the Volunteer

A number of organizations recruit and train older persons to work with children in schools. These include the RSVP, ACTION and Foster Grandparents' Program. (See Resources for a listing of these and other agencies.) If, however, one of these organizations is not present in a community, there are other effective ways of recruiting volunteers to the program.

Word of mouth is believed to be one of the most effective forms of recruiting. As the children and their parents register at the

beginning of the school or program year, they can be introduced to the idea of the intergenerational program. It may be that a child has an older relative, neighbor, friend or grandparent who would be eager to work in the program.

Telling others about the project, at church, in the shopping center or at social gatherings is another effective method of spreading the word. A survey of the residents of the neighborhood can also identify older people who might be interested in working with children.

Some programs have prepared materials to use in recruiting volunteers. A slide-tape presentation of the program may be shown to church groups or civic organizations. Slides of children and older people working together are sure to attract interest in the project and also volunteers.

An attractive brochure, concisely describing the goals of the intergenerational program is useful. These brochures can tell something of the goals of the program and who to call to volunteer to work in the program. These can be placed in shopping centers, health clinics, social halls, churches--wherever older people meet.

Other programs are fortunate to have money to advertise in a local paper or on radio. All programs can, however, prepare a news story for the local press, radio or TV station. Giving the details of the project, why it's important, who can volunteer and how are effective methods for recruiting volunteers.

Agencies in the community--church and civic groups, social clubs, chamber of commerce, neighborhood councils--are other sources for recruitment. A notice of the project can be placed in the newsletters of these groups and another posted on their bulletin boards.

Deciding on the What

Together, the faculty, staff, coordinator of volunteers and the volunteers, decide on the role of the volunteers in the program. A review of the policies of the school or program is necessary to determine what kinds of jobs volunteers can and cannot do. In some school districts no one but the teacher may be responsible for anything that is considered academic in nature. Other programs stipulate that the staff must be present at all times and never leave a room when a volunteer is working with children. It is necessary to research existing policies before reaching any decisions about what volunteers can and cannot do.

Once the policies are understood, the types of things volunteers will do with children can be determined. Any activity or experience is possible. Some volunteers will tutor children in academic work; others help children with special needs. Some may teach skills, crafts, games; others may just be available to talk with children. Older people in a study of elderly persons' attitudes toward children said they liked to take children on trips, play games with them, teach them things, go for walks, read to them, teach them to knit, crochet, sew and bake. When volunteers can work directly with children and want to work with children, any of these activities would be appropriate. Whatever the activities of the volunteer, they should be of interest to the volunteer and to the children and should be designed to help foster the goals of the project.

Some volunteers may not wish to work with children directly. These may decide that support services a e better suited to their interests and skills. They may complete clerical tasks, prepare materials for the children or help with other aspects of the program. If the volunteers are "behind the scene" it's still important for someone to introduce them to the children. Then children can begin to know and recognize that older people care for them and work to help them.

Whatever the volunteers do, whatever the task assigned to them, it's critical that the task be perceived of as important. It's not necessary for everyone to view the volunteer's task as crucial, but it is necessary to match the task to the volunteer. What is perceived of as busy work by one may be seen as highly important by another. It must be clear, however, that the tasks are real and not simply created as busy work for an older person.

It should also be clear to the children, from the types of activities the volunteers will be doing that the elderly are a diverse group of people with a wide range of interests, skills, talents and abilities. When deciding what the volunteers will do, think about how the diversity and individuality of elderly persons can be demonstrated.

What really is important is that the teacher, faculty, children and volunteers are clear in understanding their roles before the project begins. Specifically about what the volunteer can and cannot do or will be expected and not expected to do is essential. The more clearly the

volunteer and staff understand exactly what is expected, the more successful the program will be. When all know exactly what they are to do many potential problems are volved before they have a chance to begin.

ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

As long as people live, they learn. Elder volunteers are eager to learn, highly motivated and anxious to do something meaningful for themselves and others. In planning orientation and training programs, however, it's important to remember that volunteers are truly a diverse group of people. The individuality each volunteer brings with him or her to the program must be respected. Because the volunteers are so eager to learn, it's also important that training be immediately rewarding and relevant.

Training, no matter what form it takes, is essential. If a program is to be successful, the volunteer must have the skills, knowledge and positive attitudes that produce effectiveness. Training and education have been related to positive attitudes and knowledge of children. Training also helps build the volunteer's sense of commitment, security and personal success.

Orientation

Establishing Commitment

Volunteering can be a sometime thing if commitment isn't established. If the volunteers do not feel committed to the program and believe their work is crucial, it's easy for them to drop out of the program or come only when they have nothing better to do. Thus, the first stage in orientation and training is to establish the importance of the role of the volunteer and build commitment to the program.

To build commitment, first build a feeling of group membership. Involving the new volunteer with a group, perhaps of other volunteers or

the faculty and staff, helps build commitment. In a group volunteers experience the friendship, warmth and commitment of others and begin to see themselves as members of a team.

Providing the volunteer with information about the program is also helpful in establishing commitment. Informing the volunteer of the goals of the program, how the program works, some of the successes or relating anecdotes about children all help to give the new volunteers a sense of the importance of their job.

Building Security

Insecurity is not unusual when first beginning a new job or entering into a new group. One part of orientation and training should be designed to build a sense of security in the volunteer. This sense of security can be fostered in different ways.

Conducting an individual interview with the volunteer is useful. During this initial interview the volunteer has a chance to ask questions about the job and the program. The volunteer's ideas are listened to and they have an opportunity to tell about their own skills, interests and concerns.

At this initial interview the volunteer can be given a brochure about the program. This brochure can describe the goals of the program, what the volunteers will do to fulfill these goals and give other important information about the program. A map of the building, the key personnel and their phone numbers, who to contact when questions arise--all this--can be included.

Volunteers will feel more secure when they are informed. There should probably be at least one formal group meeting with the people who actually work with the children and the volunteers. Perhaps the teachers or staff may show slides or movies of their program or describe the program in some other way to the volunteers. The volunteers' knowledge of the program and the role they'll play should be highlighted.

A tour of the building is also useful to build initial security. Familiarity with the layout of the building, where the rest rooms are, the cafeteria, the room set aside for volunteer's use and the people who work in the different parts of the building make volunteers feel more secure in their new position.

Some time should be set aside for volunteers to observe the program in action. It may be helpful to present them with a list of things to look for as they observe. The things to look for might include: how teachers interact with children; how volunteers work with the children; the types of discipline being implemented and how children behave.

Security also comes when volunteers clearly understand their own role. Taking time to discuss the role with each volunteer will be useful in building security and in keeping communication open.

Planning Success

A successful experience at the beginning of a person's job as a volunteer is desirable. Some activity should be planned that creates a feeling of success. It may be that the volunteer will want to meet with one child or a group of children; or it may be that the initial success comes from meeting with teachers or even working with children.

It's important to use the skills and interests of the volunteer to foster initial success. Whatever skills and talents the volunteer has can be the basis for planning an initial activity. If the volunteer can play the piano, knit, read a story or enjoys cooking, listening to children--whatever--they should be given the opportunity to utilize this interest or talent as an introductory activity.

Meeting Other Needs

Elder volunteers may have needs that can also be met through the intergenerational program. It may be possible to establish commitment, security and success by helping to meet these other needs of the volunteer. Some volunteers may feel the need for social activities and friendship; others need help in obtaining social services or health care. Some groups have met to learn techniques of self-defense and still others to learn more about their own growth and development. Some may wish to learn more about the nature of teaching or working with young children. The volunteers usually determine the nature of these meetings and can plan and conduct these themselves.

Training

In a study of Elderly Persons' Attitudes Toward Children at the University of Maryland it was shown that education was related to more knowledge of children and to positive attitudes toward children. If education is related to both knowledge and attitudes, then intergenerational programs should plan for the continual, ongoing training and education of volunteers.

Training Begins

Training begins during the initial interview and continues throughout the program. It should be designed to meet the needs of each individual. Some volunteers may have worked a lifetime with children and need little orientation or training to understand their new role. Others may never have worked or may have been inactive for a number of years and will need more support as they enter the field of work.

During the initial interview the background of the volunteer can be determined. Because training should depend on the skills individuals bring with them the initial interview can be used to determine the background of the volunteer. Volunteers who have young grandchildren, who have frequent contact with young children or who have spent a lifetime working with children, may need little orientation to work with children. These volunteers may even be able to train others, whose background doesn't include contact with children.

In addition to determining the skills and background of the volunteer, the initial interview is actually the first training session. During this first interview the nature of the job is explained and the role of the volunteer clarified. The resources of the school and community used in the program may be introduced. The children's needs are discussed and plans made for meeting these needs.

Volunteers may also be prepared for the openness of children at the interview. Sometimes children ask many questions that might be

perceived of as impertinent if not understood. Understanding that asking questions is one of the major ways children try to make sense of their world will help the volunteer relate with children. For instance, children really are curious about wrinkles and may ask the volunteer if wrinkles hurt. Or they may be curious about gray hair, glasses or other physical characteristics of older people and ask about these features. If the volunteer understands something about the natural curiosity of children and doesn't misinterpret the questioning child, stronger and more positive intergenerational relationships might result.

Using Observations

Observations are a useful form of training. If two volunteers are assigned the same child to observe or same group of children, they can then compare notes and discuss the things they observe, learning from one another. Pairing volunteers so there is one on each team who has had contact or experience with young children may be helpful. It's also helpful to have the teacher or group leader meet with the volunteers after the observation to describe their goals and to clarify exactly what happened while the volunteers were observing. One volunteer observing in a classroom was highly disturbed when a teacher ignored a child who was crying. When the teacher met with the volunteers after the session she explained that this child always cried to get her way and was deliberately being ignored on this day to extinguish crying behavior.

Group Meetings

Group meetings with lectures and talks aren't always very effective as a training method. Nevertheless, there are times when the entire group of volunteers will meet and share information. Audio-visual materials--movies, slides, film strips--are appropriate ways of communicating a lot of information to a group. Some sessions can be led by other volunteers, as they relate their own experiences.

Panel meetings, with perhaps a teacher, volunteer, parent and physician, discussing health needs of children or other concerns are usually effective. Members of the panel present their own ideas and views of a specific problem; then questions are presented to the panel members as a group for discussion.

Buzz groups, giving a small group of volunteers a problem to solve and then share with the total group, help insure that everyone participates in the training. Writing the problem to be solved on a card and handing the card to the group is useful in keeping the discussion on task. The more specific the problem to be discussed the better. For instance, the task, "List three things a volunteer can do to make a child feel successful," will probably be more effective than asking a group to think of ways of working with children.

Individual Meetings

The initial interview was one type of individual meeting. Throughout the program these individual meetings should take place between

volunteer and coordinator or supervisor. The volunteers are given feedback about how they are progressing and specific problems are addressed. Different ways of working with individual children or groups of children are suggested. Individual meetings are appropriate for introducing new ideas, solving problems and for suggesting alternative ways of working with children.

Giving Feedback

Perhaps the best training is on-the-job; that is, as long as there is a supervisor, coordinator or teacher in charge who is willing and able to provide the volunteer with feedback. As volunteers work directly with children they need to know how effective they are. The coordinator can point out the ways the volunteer made a unique contribution to the growth of a child or the program. Likewise, the coordinator could make constructive suggestions for trying alternative approaches of working with children.

Volunteers should also be encouraged to interact with one another and give feedback to one another. A room in the building and time for the volunteers to meet together and share their expertise is another way feedback can be given. Through these discussions with others volunteers recognize that they are significant.

Feedback is actually another form of evaluation. Volunteers can contribute to the evaluation of themselves, others and the program. Asking the volunteers to identify the things they did during the day, week or session that they thought were, or were not, particularly successful or to identify the things that helped or impeded the achievement of their goals can be useful.

Providing Recognition

Volunteering and working with children is intrinsically rewarding. When volunteers see the joy children receive from their presence and recognize their contribution to cementing relations between generations few outside rewards are necessary. Yet, no matter how fulfilling their role is or how important the volunteer perceives her task, outside rewards and recognition are important.

The idea of budgeting for some type of monetary reward for the volunteers should be considered. It is important in our society for people to receive renumeration for their work. But money isn't always enough. Volunteers must receive recognition from their peers, colleagues and the public. Providing feedback is one type of reinforcement. When someone in the program recognizes your importance by giving you positive feedback you know you count. Feedback car come from children, parents or staff.

Newspaper and media coverage provide another form of recognition. Local papers are very interested in reporting positive human relations stories. Pictures of young and old working together and the story of the project will appeal to small community newspapers. Most people feel rewarded if their work is reported in the local paper or on radio.

A certificate of appreciation from the school or program to the volunteer is also seen as recognition. The certificate should be personal with the name of the volunteer; presentation to the volunteer either at an individual meeting or an awards banquet is most meaningful.

An end of the year awards banquet or meeting is usually well attended and received. The director of the project, mayor, city council members and other important people in the community can be invited to attend. A public thank you to the volunteers and presentation of certificates of appreciation provide reward and recognition.

Rewards and recognition like training are ongoing and continual. They do not always need to be formal. A thank you at the end of the day by the teacher, a hug from a child or recognition of a special task completed successfully are types of ongoing rewards. Courteous treatment, respect and compliments can be given throughout the day to let the volunteers know they are making important contributions.

CONTENT

Current issues and an understanding of children should be part of the content of training programs for intergenerational programs. Anyone working directly or indirectly with young children should have familiarity with PL 94-142, the rights of children and the dangers of stereotyping. An understanding of the characteristics of children of differing ages, how to work effectively with children and methods of positive discipline are also necessary.

Current Issues

Schools have changed dramatically over the past few years. Volunteers will need to be introduced to some of the current trends in programs for children. For instance, the Education of All Handicapped Act PL 94-142, will continue to have far reaching effects on educational practices. It may be very possible that elderly volunteers will be recruited for the sole purpose of working with children who have special needs. Even if volunteers are not assigned to work directly with children who are handicapped, they will need to be aware that children with special needs will be in regular classrooms.

There are many other concerns facing people who work with children today. The rights of children and the dangers of stereotyping on the basis of sex, race and even age, are concerns volunteers should understand.

PL 94-142

In 1975 the All Handicapped Children's Act (PL 94-142) extended the right of free public education to all handicapped between the ages of

three and 21. The results of this legislation have been dramatic. Some changes that have resulted are:

*formal assessment of all children identified as having special needs.

*participation of parents in the process of assessment of their children and educational planning.

*orderly steps for appeal or review of decisions about the child.

*pursuing the goal of integrating the child with special needs in regular classrooms.

One result of the legislation is the need for supplementary persons to work with children who have special needs. People who can spend full time tutoring the child with special needs or caring for the child's physical needs in a regular classroom setting are necessary. Because all children with handicaps are mandated to have an Individual Educational Plan elder volunteers may be recruited to help fulfill such plans, providing individual attention, instruction and care for a particular child.

Rights of Children

Today it's recognized that children have the same rights as adults. In a study of elderly persons' attitudes toward children, older people expressed positive feelings toward the rights of children. Recent legislation has recognized that children have the fundamental rights of all citizens. They, just as adults, are afforded the rights to:

*respect for one's self.

*respect for others and their rights.

*respect for individual dignity

*respect for legally constituted authority

all guaranteed under the Constitution of the United States.

It's important for volunteers to understand that children have the fundamental rights to dress the way they wish, wear their hair the way they wish, even salute or not salute the flag as they wish.

In addition, students and their families, have the right to privacy. What goes on at the school must not be repeated outside of the school. Any records a volunteer may have contact with must not be shared outside of the program. The confidentiality of all student records and of the events that occur at school must continually be stressed.

Danger-Stereotypes Hurt

Every contact children have with the elder volunteer is laden with values. Whether intended or not, the volunteer will communicate his or her values to the children. It is the concern of intergenerational programs that the values of our society are protected. The equality of all--of those of different races, and of both boys and girls--must be conveyed and communicated clearly to the children.

The elder volunteers may be helped to identify their own value systems and decide how they will convey their values to the children. Volunteers might be confronted with the dangers of sterotyping groups, whether by race, sex or age. What will happen if boys are told they can't cry? Or girls are told they can't be doctors? Then too, how do they really feel about their own age? What attitudes do they communicate to children if they talk about "their tired old bones" or "being too old for that."

Because the older volunteer is loved and respected by the children, children will be quick to pick up the attitudes of the volunteer. Positive as well as negative attitudes are transmitted and emulated.

Characteristics of Children

Anyone who works with young children should have an understanding of the importance of their role. The older volunteer needs to understand the great impact he or she will have on the lives of children. It's a fact that children will identify with and imitate the volunteers. They will learn attitudes and values as well as skills and knowledge from the volunteers whether planned or not.

A basic understanding of children and ways of working with children is essential if intergenerational programs are to achieve their identified goals. Volunteers will need to know something about the characteristics of young children and methods of working with them as well as techniques of discipline.

In general, older people do know a lot about the characteristics of young children. However, they seem to have more knowledge of older children, those over the age of seven; also they tend to overestimate what children can do. The 1979 study at the University of Maryland on elderly persons' attitudes toward children also indicated that older persons may be more comfortable working with children if they realize that teaching involves guiding and facilitating, rather than telling.

Flexible ways of working with children, of introducing new ideas skills and knowledge, can be introduced to the volunteers. Older persons

indicated that they believed discipline should be strict and firm. It's not that children shouldn't be disciplined; however, methods of disciplining children must be positive as well as firm and effective. This should be communicated to the older volunteers.

Volunteers will come to the program with different backgrounds and knowledge of children. Some may have worked a lifetime with children and others may have been close to children. Thus, training about the characteristics of children should be very individualized. Perhaps asking the volunteers to identify their own training needs will be useful. Volunteers might be asked, "What age group of children are you most familiar with?" "Which group would you like to work with?" "How long do you want to work with the children, which days, for what hours?" "What things about working with children do you feel you'd like to become familiar with?" "Are there any skills of working with children you'd like to improve?"

Even though training will be individualized there are certain understandings that all volunteers should have. Everyone who comes in contact with young children should be able to:

*communicate effectively with young children.

*demonstrate an affection and caring for children by making appropriate contact with them.

*understand how important praise and encouragement is for children's growth and learning, recognizing that praise and encouragement is more effective in promoting desirable behavior than negative or punitive techniques.

*tolerate children's noise and activity

*respect parents and recognize their strengths and differences in life styles.

*understand that a child's self concept is important for all future learning.

*realize that discipline through establishing a positive environment is effective.

*use redirection as a means of discipline.

*demonstrate warmth, openness, flexibility and willingness to learn more about children.

*be willing to accept constructive evaluation by staff and parents.

*understand that teaching involves guiding and facilitating rather than telling.

The Concept of Readiness

An introduction to the concept of readiness may be appropriate because elderly people tend to overestimate the age at which children can do things. The idea that one child may be able to tie shoes before another, read or complete multiplication before another, should be fostered through training. Some children will be ready to play with others at four years of age and others will have trouble forming friendships at five years of age. It's important for volunteers to understand the wide range of individual differences in children's readiness to learn and then to know how to arrange experiences for the readiness of children.

Until children have a background of experiences and the necessary maturity, they simply cannot learn something new. Learning to gear the activity or experience to the child's maturity level will be an important component of training programs. Adults will have to learn to provide experiences for children that are neither too easy, nor too difficult. If the activities are too easy the child will be bored; yet if too difficult, the child won't even want to try and will be turned off. Activities should be "matched" with the children's particular stage of development and maturation. When the "match" is right, children will grow and learn.

Teachers of young children find that one way to solve the problem of the "match" is to let children choose a lot of their own activities. Children are usually good judges of their own abilities and will try things at which they know they can succeed which are still challenging. That's why paints, clay, wood, puzzles of differing levels, crayons and paper, a variety of books, blocks and other materials are usually found in rooms for young children. These types of materials let all children succeed and yet provide each with a challenge.

Discipline Techniques

Volunteers will need to understand the way the people in the project discipline children. Often there are definite rules and restrictions about the kind of discipline or who is responsible for discipline. This should be made very clear to the volunteer. In addition, something about the nature of disciplining children can be introduced.

Good discipline begins with the adult showing warmth and affection for children. When children recognize that the adults around them do respect them, and feel affection for them, they are anxious to please and need little overt discipline.

Having a plan is also effective. When the volunteer knows exactly what he or she will do with the child, has all the materials ready and doesn't ask children to wait or be quiet while the volunteer gets materials ready, a lot of discipline problems will not occur.

Then too, it's helpful to remember that children will model after those they love and respect. The volunteer's every action will be repeated by the children. A volunteer who respects other people and materials and uses praise and encouragement with others will be copied by the children.

Good teachers do understand that young children are VERY active, noisy and that they learn through doing. Being able to tolerate activity and noise is important when working with children. If volunteers believe young children should be quiet and sit for long periods then perhaps they would be happer working with older children who are able to sit for longer times and don't have to be as active when involved in learning.

When children do get angry, lose control and lash out, positive ways of redirecting them can be used. Volunteers can be taught a number of ways to help children vent their feelings in safe, productive ways. Volunteers can learn to redirect angry, sad, or elated children to paint, run as fast as they can in the playyard, read a story or redirect their feelings in other safe and acceptable ways.

Even with the best planning and the best models children still have trouble with control. Volunteers should learn the techniques for stopping trouble before it occurs and for handling it when it does arise. It must be clear that children cannot hurt themselves or others, either with words or actions. Volunteers can learn to stop this kind of behavior with eye contact, a shake of their head, or words, "Roberta, not now!" or even by putting an arm around a child.

But what do you do when a child does act out, hits or kicks anothers? Often the first responsibility is to care for the child who has been hit. Then after feelings have clamed and children are ready to listen, the teacher and volunteer can help the child who lost control think of other ways for handling feelings.

Teaching Techniques

Children are eager learners. They want to learn about the olden days, how to read, play games and make things. Children love to learn, but they don't learn by being told. Often teaching is confused with telling and volunteers should become familiar with the way children do learn. They should be very prepared to work with children through activities and experiences, rather than just words.

Before the volunteer decides to teach children some new skill they may think about planning for a doing lesson. "What objects can I bring that will interest the children in the idea I'm presenting?" "What will the children do?" For example, if volunteers wish to introduce children to gardening they might bring flowers for the children to smell, examine, take apart and plant, and tools for children to plant their own seeds or make their own garden.

Language is an important tool in teaching but should be used only in connection with children's experiences. Children can be encouraged to talk about the flower or plant or how it feels to dig in the ground. The volunteer may name the parts of the flower and the tools as the children uses them and offer verbal explanations of why the plant must receive water or have the roots tenderly placed in the ground. Listening should be viewed as an important teaching skill. As children talk about their activity the volunteer listens, corrects misconcepts, offers new words and uses language to help children clarify their own thinking and verbalize their thoughts.

Learning when to change pace is also important. Young children do have very short attention spans, so volunteers can learn to plan activities that are brief, matching children's attention spans. If children do become absorbed with a specific activity, volunteers can allow the activity to continue because as long as children are really involved they're learning. But they should also be ready to stop the lesson or activity when children's interests change and they become tired.

Volunteers might ask themselves, as they plan to teach children:

1. Is this a job a child can do well?
2. Will it take too much time or is it suited to this group or children's attention span?
3. Is this task really important to the child? Will the child's family also value it?
4. Will the children have a part in choosing how to complete the task or learn the skill?

5. Can they be given praise for doing a good job as they learn?

Remember too, children do enjoy repeating a familiar task. It gives them a sense of mastery. They enjoy hearing the same story over and over again and completing the same puzzle over and over again. It's not that children shouldn't be introduced to new and different stories and puzzles, but simply to remember that not every activity should be new and unusual to the children. The goal is to provide children with an ever-widening world of experiences and ever-widening skills and knowledge.

Those who work with children must be willing to follow the children's lead and be open to children's ideas. Volunteers who seek to work with children must be prepared to relax and enjoy the company of children; thus making the experience most valuable and rewarding for all those involved.

Positive interactions with elderly volunteers will not only help children learn new things but also help them to learn about older people. With elderly volunteers, children will have active role models to help dispel the myths and stereotypes associated with aging. At the same time, older people will experience the love of children and will be rewarded by seeing children grow and learn.

RESOURCES

Organizations

The following organizations can be contacted for help in locating older people willing to visit the classroom or to volunteer their time to work with children.

ACTION Regional Office
320 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

National School Volunteer Program
300 N. Washington Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program)
14 S. Perry Street
Rockville, Maryland 20850

SERVE (Community Service Society of New York
Committee on Aging
105 East 22nd Street
New York, New York 10010

These organizations are concerned with all aspects of aging and might be contacted for additional resources specifically concerned with aging and the elderly.

Administration on Aging
Department of Health, Education and Welfare
Washington, D.C. 20402

American Association of Retired Persons
National Retired Teachers Association
1901 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20006

Gerontological Society
1 Dupont Circle
Washington, D.C. 20036

Gray Panthers
3700 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104

Jewish Association for Services for the Aged
222 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10003

National Council on Aging
1828 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Several organizations provide resources for people who work with children in a variety of settings. These organizations may offer free or inexpensive materials with ideas for working with children.

Administration for Children, Youth, and Families
Office of Human Development Services
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, D.C. 20013

Association for Childhood Educational International (ACEI)
3615 Wisconsin Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20016

Child Study Association of America
9 East 89th Street
New York, N. Y. 10010

Council for Exceptional Children
1930 Association Drive
Reston, Virginia 22091

Day Care and Child Development Council of America, Inc.
1401 K Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
1834 Connecticut Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009

National Congress of Parents and Teachers
700 North Rush Street
Chicago, Illinois 60511

National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)
3615 Wisconsin Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20016

Intergenerational Programs

There are numerous intergenerational programs operating today. These may have materials or suggestions useful in establishing intergenerational programs. There are many other programs in existence; these are only a few of those currently in operation.

Older Adult Project
New York City School Volunteer Program
20 West 40th Street
New York, New York 10016

Project M.O.V.E. (Miami's Older Volunteers in Education)
School Volunteer Program of Miami
Dade County Public Schools
2121 Ponce de Leon Boulevard
Coral Gables, Florida 33134

Senior Citizen School Volunteer Program
Western Pennsylvania Gerontology Center
University of Pittsburgh
600 A Mervis Hall
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260

Takoma Park Elementary School RSVP Volunteers
Montgomery County Retired Senior Volunteer Program
14 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Teaching-Learning About Aging
McCarthy-Towne School
Acton, Massachusetts 01720

Teaching-Learning Communities (T-LC)
Ann Arbor Public Schools
600 West Jefferson
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103

Books, Articles, Publications

Setting Up a Volunteer Program

Carter, B. and Dapper, G. School Volunteers: What They Do - How They Do It. New York: Citation Press, 1972.

Howard, H. & Tice, C., Ann Arbor Public Schools. E.S.E.A. Title IV-C Project. Teaching-Learning Communities. A final Report. Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1976.

Klopf, G.J., Bowman, G.W., & Joy, A. A Learning Team: Teacher and Auxiliary. New York: Bank Street College of Education.

Murphy, J. and Florio, C. Never Too Old to Teach. New York: Academy for Educational Development, 1978.

The Older Volunteer

Bowles, Elinor. Older Persons as Provider of Services: Three Federal Programs. Social Policy, 1976, 7:(3), 81-88.

Conk, J. & Conk, S. Using Community Language Resources in Schools. Theory Into Practice. 1977, 16(5), 401-406.

Foley, M.G. Something Wonderful Happens When R.S.V.P. Comes into a School! Columbus, Ohio; Ohio Commission on Aging, 1974.

Gotbaum, V. & Bowles, E. On Volunteerism. Social Policy, 1976, 7(3), 50-51.

Hickey, H.W. Community Education's Implications for Teaching. Journal of Teacher Education, 1977, 28(4), 19-20.

Sullivan, G & Florio, C. Senior Citizens in Education. Social Policy, 1976, 7(3), 103-106.

Aging Awareness

Bellak, L. The Best Years of Your Life-A Guide to the Art and Sciences of Aging. New York:Atheneum, 1975.

Butler, R. Why Survive: Being Old In America. New York: Harper & Row, 1975.

de Beauvoir, S. The Coming of Age. New York:Warner Paperback Library, 1973.

Finkelhor, D. The Triumph of Age. Chicago: Follett Publishing Co., 1979.

Grant, R., Kramer, C., Marks, R. & Newman, S. Aging Awareness:An Annotated Bibliography, Pittsburgh, Pa., University of Pittsburg, 1979.

Keen, B.M. Good! I'm Growing Old. New York:Exposition Press, 1974.

Moss, G. & Moss, W. Growing Old. New York:Pocket Books, 1975.

Rosow, I. Socialization and Old Age. Berkeley, California: University Press, 1974.

U.S. Congress, Special Committee on Aging Older Americans Comprehensive Services Amendments of 1973; Explanation of 1973 Admendments and Selected Background Materials. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973.

Williams, E. & Wirths, C. Lives Through the Years. New York: Atherton Press, 1965.

Attitudes Toward Aging, The Elderly

Ansello, E.F. Ageism: The Subtle Stereotype. Childhood Education, 1978, 54(3), 118-120.

Bengtson, V.L., Dowd, J., Smith, D. & Inkeles, A. Modernization, Modernity, and Perceptions of Aging: A Cross-Cultural Study. Journal of Gerontology, 1975, 30(6), 688-695.

Bennett, R. Attitudes of the Young Toward the Old. A Review of Research. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 1976, 55(3), 136.

Comfort, A. Age Prejudice in America. Social Policy, 1976, 7(3), 3.

Jantz, R.K., Seefeldt, C., Galper, A. & Serock, K. Children's Attitudes Toward the Elderly. Social Education, 1977, 41(6), 518-523.

Kawabori, C. The Aged: An Opportunity for the Educator. Health Education, 1975, 6(4), 6-7.

Palmore, E. Facts on Aging: A Short Quiz. The Gerontologist, 1977, 17(4), 315-320.

Seefeldt, C., Jantz, R.K., Galper,A. & Serock, D. Children's Attitudes Toward the Elderly: Educational Implications. Educational Gerontology, 1977, 2(3), 301-310.

Working With Children

A wide variety of Journals and periodicals are available containing many concrete suggestions for working with children in school and non-school settings. A selected sample of these journals includes:

American Education
Art Education
Childhood Education
Contemporary Education
Educational Leadership
Elementary School Journal
Exceptional Children
Gerontologist
The Instructor
Journal of Educational Research
Journal of Social Psychology
Phi Delta Kappan
The Reading Teacher
School and Society
Science and Children
Social Education
Today's Children
Young Children

Books, Articles and Manuals

Numerous publications are available containing ideas for working with children in school and nonschool settings. These may be useful in training programs for the elderly.

Althoff, S.A. Preparing Teachers, Students and Citizens to Deal Constructively with the Problems and Potentialities of Aging. ERIC Clearinghouse on Teacher Education. Washington, D.C., 1975.

Atwood, H.M. Activities for Teaching About Aging: Primary, Elementary, Secondary. Muncie, Indiana: Ball State University.

Baker, V. Ideas That Work With Children. Vol. I and II. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1975 and 1978.

Boston Children's Medical Center. What to Do When There's Nothing To Do. New York: A Dell Book, 1968.

Cameron, M.J. Views of Aging: A Teacher's Guide. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Institute of Gerontology, University of Michigan-Wayne State University.

Comeauz, M. Curriculum Materials on Aging. University of Southwestern Louisiana, School of Home Economics, 1967.

Croom, B.J. Aging Education for the High School Student. Social Education, 1978, 42(5), 406-408.

Gross, P.P. Unit on Aging: Grades 4-6. San Jose, CA: San Jose State University, 1975.

Hildebrand, V. Guiding Young Children. New York: Macmillan Co., 1975.

Jacobs, B., Lindsley, P. & Feil, M. A Guide to Intergenerational Programming. Washington, D.C.: National Council on the Aging, 1976.

Jacobs, H.L. Youth Looks at Aging: A Unit of Study on Aging at the Secondary School Level. Ames, Iowa: University of Iowa, Division of Extension and University Service, 1969.

Jantz, R.K., Seefeldt, C., Galper, A. & Serock, K. Curriculum Guide: Children's Attitudes Toward the Elderly. College Park, Md.: Center on Aging, University of Maryland, 1976.

Linderman, E.W. & Linderman, M.M. Crafts for the Classroom. New York: Macmillan Co., 1977.

Pratt, F.E. Teaching About Aging. ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/ Science Education. Boulder, Colorado, 1976.

Seefeldt, C. Curriculum for Preschools (2nd Ed.) Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1980.

Storck, P.A. & Davies, B.K. Aging: A Kindergarten Curriculum, 1977.

Wigginton, E. (Ed.). The Foxfire Book. Garden City, New York: Anchor Press. Book I, 1972; Book 2, 1973; Book 3, 1975; Book 4, 1977; Book 5, 1979.

Wogaman, E. Folklore is Fun: Communication Comes Alive. English Journal, 1966, 55(2), 209-210.

Your Child From One to Six. Your Child From Six to Twelve. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977.

Books for Children

Many books are available to introduce children of all ages to different aspects of aging. You can become more aware of the portrayal of older people in the materials of the school and select many other books depicting older persons in active, fulfilled roles.

Blue, R. Grandma Didn't Wave Back. New York: Franklin Watts, Inc., 1972.

Borach, B. Grandpa. New York: Harper & Row, 1967.

Buckley, H.E. Grandfather and I. West Caldwell, N.J.: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, Co., 1959.

Burch, R. Two that Were Touched. New York: Viking Press, Inc., 1976.

Cleaver, V. Queen of Hearts. Philadelphia, Pa.: J.B. Lippincott, Co., 1978.

Clymer, E. The Spider, The Cave and the Pottery Bowl. New York: Atheneum Publishers.

De Paola, T. Nana Upstairs, Nana Downstairs. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1973.

Gardner, L. The Oldest and the Youngest and the One in the Middle. Eau Claire, Wisconsin: E.M. Hale and Company, 1954.

Greene, P. Grandmother Orphan. Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1977.

Harder, B. & Harder, E. The Big Snow. Riverside, N.J.: Macmillan Co., 1948.

Kleberger, I. Grandmother Oma. New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1969.

Klein, L. How Old Is Old? New York: Harvey House, Inc., 1967.

Kumin, M. When Mother Was Young. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1970.

Lexau, J.M. Benjie On His Own. New York: Dial Press, Inc., 1970.

Matthis, S.B. The Hundred Penny Box. New York: Viking Press, 1975.

Miles, M. Annie and the Old One. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1971

Orgel, D. The Mulberry Music. New York: Harper & Row, 1971

Robinson, J. The Secret Life of T. K. Dearing. New York: Seabury Press, Inc., 1973.

White. E.B. Charlotte's Web. New York: Harper & Row, 1952.

Zolotow, C. William's Doll. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

Media for Volunteer Training

The following film distributors may be contacted for films and other media useful in training volunteers.

ACI Films, Inc., 35 West 45th Street, New York, N.Y. 10036.

Appleton-Century-Crofts, Educational Division. 440 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016.

BFA Educational Media, 2211 Michigan Avenue, Santa Monica, CA 90404

Billy Budd Films, Inc., 235 East 57th Street, New York, N.Y. 10022.

Center for Southern Folklore, 3756 Mimosa Avenue, Memphis, Tenn. 38111.

Communications Commission of Jewish Federation -- Council of Greater Los Angeles, 590 N. Vermont, Los Angeles, CA 90004.

Concept Media, 1500 Adams Avenue, Costa Mesa, CA 92626.

Contemporary Films/McGraw-Hill, 1221 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10020.

Hanick-Dacchille, 810 West 183rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10003.

Indiana University, Audio-Visual Center, Bloomington, Indiana 47401.

Jam Handy Productions, Available through the Indiana State Library, 140 N. Senate Avenue, Indianapolis, Ind. 46204.

Learning Corporation of America, 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10019.

McGraw-Hill Films, 1221 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10020.

Modern Talking Picture Service, Inc., 1212 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10020.

National Film Board of Canada, 1251 Avenue of the Americas, 16th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10020.

Oxford Films, Inc., 1136 N. Las Palmas Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90038.

Paulist Productions, P.O. Box 1057, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272.

SERVE, Community Service Society of New York, 105 East 22nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10010.

Schloat Productions, Inc., 150 White Plains Road, Tarrytown, N.Y. 10591.

Sunburst Communications, Poundridge, New York 10567.

Time-Life Films, 100 Eisenhower Drive, Paramus, N.J. 07652.

University of Iowa, Audio-Visual Center, Iowa City, Iowa 52240.

University of Michigan, Audio-Visual Education Center, 416 Fourth Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103.

University of Rhode Island, James H. Goff, Executive Producer, 41 Davis Hall, Kingston, Rh;ode Island 02881.

Youth Film Distribution Center, Inc., 43 West 16th Street, New York, N.Y. 10011.